

**AVT-253 Intro to Digital Photography
Course Syllabus- Fall 2016
George Mason University**

Online

Instructor: Stephanie Booth

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Prerequisites: No previous experience in photography is necessary and no prerequisites are required for this class.

DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to the technical and aesthetic properties of digital photography with an emphasis on the use of a manual camera as a tool for electronic photographic image making. Additionally, students will learn to create efficient digital workflow using basic image-editing skills and software programs. Students will learn the technical aspects of photography as well as how to use the camera as a tool for creating art and idea expression.

Course Learner Objectives

- Adjust the camera settings to control the resulting image including:
 - Proper exposure control and light metering
 - Aperture and Shutter speed
 - White balance
 - The use of ISO in controlling digital noise
- Apply technique and aesthetics to express visual concepts
- Create a small body of work
- Critique images created by themselves and their peers in terms of technical quality and conceptual strengths
- Deconstruct the work of fine arts photographers.

Course Requirements and Grading

To be successful in this class, you must:

- Be prepared to participate fully in all aspects of the course. This is an online course and you are expected to log on at least three times a week.
- Participate in class discussions and critique on Blackboard discussion boards. The more you participate in the discussion of your and work and your peer's work, the easier it is to communicate your own ideas. Receiving constructive criticism is crucial in the artistic process.
- Follow the requirements of the assignment and complete it on time. Failure to turn in an assignment on time will result in the grade being dropped one grade for each day it is late.
- Satisfactory completion of visual, written, and presentation assignments. Solutions to visual problems will be discussed and evaluated in class critiques and grades will be based on aesthetic merit, conceptual strength, and technical competence.

Criteria for Evaluation and Grading

- Use of appropriate tools and techniques to demonstrate understanding of the assignment
- Image quality of the final image
- Idea development and creativity
- Risk taking, ambition, and engagement with the assignment
- Participation in online discussions and critiques

Grade Breakdown:

All Shooting Assignments:	682 pts
Critique Participation	60 pts
Discussions	50 pts

Final Assessment

- A--Excellent:** Work far exceeds the expectations for the assignment. Shows exceptional grasp of technique, concept, and creative expression
- B--Very Good:** Work is of a high standard that shows a firm understanding of technical considerations and individual creative expression.
- C--Average:** Meets the expectations of the assignment and shows technical competency
- D--Poor:** Does not meet the expectations of the assignment. Work is uninspired and does not show a technical understanding.
- F--Fail:** Failure to complete the assignment in the time allotted.

A:	93%-100%
A-:	90%-92%
B+:	87%-89%
B:	84%-86%
B-:	80%-83%
C+:	77%-79%
C:	74%-76%
C-:	70%-73%
D+:	67%-69%
D:	64%-66%
D-:	60%-63%
F:	<59%

Attendance

Online attendance is an essential part of the course. This is an experience based class and artistic growth comes only through continued active participation. You are expected to log on and participate on class discussion boards and assignments a minimum of three times a week.

Plagiarism/Cheating

Only students' own photos and images are permitted for use in projects. The unauthorized use of images and compositions that are not your own is considered plagiarism and will result in a zero for the project. Any type of plagiarism, artistic or written, can result in a zero for the assignment and will negatively impact your final grade in the course.

CLASS POLICIES**EMAIL / Blackboard POLICY**

You must check e-mail and Blackboard on a regular basis. Assignments and course communications will be dispersed via email and/or posted to Blackboard.

Be professional in your emails. Open them with a greeting, be respectful, write in complete sentences and avoid all caps. Before asking a question, first thoroughly read the syllabus, course documents, assignments, and announcements on Blackboard. Allow at least 48 hours for a response during the work week. Emails sent after 4pm on Friday will be returned by Monday at noon.

Because of the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**, I will only respond to emails sent from your **school-assigned address**: please include your full name and the course number (example: Jane Doe, AVT 253) in the subject line.

Notes on Course Content

In this course we may experience some content that can be, or has in the past, been considered provocative. People can be potentially offended by what we're about to see. Have respect for how other people in the room may feel, even if you don't share those feelings. Though provocative art might not be directly offensive, it can remind you of difficult experiences. Part of the course is to discuss difficult issues and put them into a historical and artistic context. You can also communicate with me via email if you feel you need additional space or information to process course content.

MATERIALS:

Recommended Text: *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice* by Modrak and Anthes
<http://tinyurl.com/34zqk66>

Most of our "text" comes from Lynda.com tutorials. However, if you feel you learn better from a traditional textbook I recommended the one listed above. You can rent it for less than twenty dollars on Amazon.com.

Software

Students who choose to work remotely will need to purchase the Adobe Creative Cloud while enrolled in this course. You will need the Photographer's Package at minimum. Visit www.adobe.com for student pricing.

Photo Cage: Students who are local to campus can rent equipment from the photo cage on campus. There are resources that can be rented from the cage including, cameras, lenses, Wacom tablets, tripods, etc. You must pay a rental fee and a security deposit for most items. This must be paid for using Mason Money. Other forms of currency are not accepted. For more information on pricing see the cage in LO11 of the School of Art on the Fairfax campus.

Camera: Digital Camera with manual exposure metering, manual focus controls, and RAW file capability is required for the course. All DSLR cameras will meet the requirements. If you have a compact camera that you think meets the requirements, please ask the instructor. A limited number of cameras are available for checkout through the cage.

Examples: Canon EOS Rebel series
 Nikon D3100 series

Memory Card: You will need to have your own digital Memory Card that is compatible with your camera. It is recommended that you have a card that is at least 2 GB in size.

Portable Media for your Files: Even if you work on your own computer you should always back up your work! Losing your memory card is not an excuse for turning in your work late. You will need a USB flash drive and/or portable hard drive for the course to back up your work.

Tripod (recommended) Tripods are available to rent from the cage.

Local Photo Supply Store

District Camera
6025 Burke Center Parkway
Bring your student ID for a possible discount

Online Photo Supply Stores

B&H Photo: www.bhphotovideo.com
Amazon: www.amazon.com
Freestyle: <http://www.freestylephoto.biz/>

School of Art Policies

This class fulfills a Mason Core requirement for Arts. Arts goal: Courses aim to achieve a majority of the following learning outcomes: students will be able to identify and analyze the formal elements of a particular art form using vocabulary appropriate to that form; demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic technique and the expression of a work's underlying concept; analyze cultural productions using standards appropriate to the form and cultural context; analyze and interpret material or performance culture in its social, historical, and personal contexts; and engage in the artistic process, including conception, creation, and ongoing critical analysis.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences: If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need Academic accommodations please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Office of Disability Services (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the Office of Disability Services.

Technology: In accordance with George Mason University policy, please silence all cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Commitment to Diversity: This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design: As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours: SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

Important University Dates:

Consortium Registration Deadline	TBD
First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date	August 29
Labor Day, university closed	September 5
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	September 6
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	September 20
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	September 30
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	September 26 – October 21
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	October 3 – October 28
Columbus Day recess (Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)	October 10
Incomplete work from spring/summer 2016 due to instructor	October 28
Incomplete grade changes from spring/summer 2016 due to Registrar	November 4
Thanksgiving recess	November 23 – 27
Last day of classes	December 10
Reading Days Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	December 12
Exam Period	Tues December 13 – Tues December 20
Degree Conferral Date The Winter Graduation Ceremony will be held on Wed December 21.	December 21

ArtsBus - Dates for Fall 2016: September 24th, October 22nd and November 19th.

ArtsBus Credit and Policies: You are responsible for knowing and following Artsbus policies and rules. Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for important information regarding ArtsBus policy. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment.

If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300.

Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need Artsbus credit BUT may need to go on the Artsbus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center of the Arts. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.

Visual Voices Lecture Series: Fall 2016 Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater: <http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/>. Dates for Fall 2016: September 1st, September 8th, September 22nd, October 6th and October 20th.

Masonlive/Email: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies: Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Honor Code: Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code. Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

Writing Center: Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis. The Collaborative Learning Hub Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ittraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.